Prayer

28. Vain Repetitions

Matthew 6:7 "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking."

Meaning: God says the heathen pray with vain repetition. Worthless and empty prayers are those which say the same things with no fervency, faith, or heart behind what is being said. There are many religions which have certain prayers, creeds, or recitations that are to be said to God daily as if to "be heard for their much speaking." Prayer is not answered by how much we say, but by the nature of our requests and our attitudes in asking.

Application: While we should not pray with vain repetition, it is not a sin to say the same things in prayer. It was Jesus of Whom the Bible says, "And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words" (Mark 14:39). However, those same words were prayed so earnestly that "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood" (Luke 22:44). To pray without ceasing and never say the same things would require a large vocabulary and imagination. The prayers we pray for repeatedly should not be cold and indifferent, but prayers should be with fervency and desire.

Other Verses for Study: I Kings 17:20-24; 18:25-29, 42-45; Matthew 6:5-15; Luke 11:5-10; James 5:16-18

1. Is it a sin to say the same things in prayer? _____

2. Things we pray for repeatedly should be prayed with _____ and _____.

3. At what time do you pray, that you have a tendency to use vain repetition? _____

"We are to press matters in prayer, not with vain repetition, but with urgent repetition."